

THE  
UNITED CHURCH OF WALPOLE

Exerpt from The Norwood Daily Messenger

April 18, 1939

### THE UNITED CHURCH IN WALPOLE IS AN OLD ONE

Brief History of Parish which started in 1724 and has passed through many changes in its' career

In 1724 the General Court of the Colonies granted the petition of the inhabitants of the south part of Dedham (now Walpole) to incorporate a town as a parish for the purpose of supporting religious worship. The petition stated that the inhabitants labored "under great difficulties by their remoteness from the place of public worship". The grant of the general court stipulated that within 18 months they erect and finish a suitable house for the public worship of God, and as soon as may be, procure and settle a learned orthodox minister of good conversation, and make provision for his comfortable and honorable support. Thus was the church the foundation of the structure of the Town of Walpole.

It was not until 1726 that the building of the church was begun, services being held meanwhile in the homes. The new church was located about where the Plimpton fountain now stands. It was 32 by 38 feet, and contained only 12 pews. This building with additions of galleries served these good people until 1781, when it was voted by the town to tear it down and to build a new one on the same spot. The new building was raised in 1783, was 60 by 40 feet, and furnished with a bell in 1791. In 1839 the First Parish Church was established on its' present location. The deed of land stated that it was "situated" in or near the center of the Town of Walpole, on the road leading to Sharon and Foxboro, and bounded - beginning at the westerly corner at a small apple tree, thence northerly on my land to a stake and stones, etc.

In 1826 the Second Congregational Church or Orthodox Congregational Church was organized at the home of Catherine Allen, corner of Peach and High Plain Streets, later meetings were held over the store at the corner of East and Main Street, and in 1827 the House of Worship was dedicated, the land having been donated by Dr. Wild, owner of the building at the corner of East and Main streets.

The Methodist Episcopal Society was formed in 1874 with a membership of twelve. In 1886 the present church was built on the land made vacant by the burning of the Centre School.

Finally in 1927 an event of great importance to the town of Walpole took place when the three societies became the United Church in Walpole. During the twelve years that have intervened a suitable place of worship has been the dream of our happily united congregation. It appears now that that dream is to become a reality.

The Women's Society has a building fund which has been growing the last few years. It is their desire that this fund be used for that part of the church which is definitely connected with women's work.

## II

### The United Church continued

The Young People's Fellowship reports a very definite and interesting program for raising money for the new church. The program consists of one dance per month, two one-act plays with dancing following, a box luncheon and carnival in the Spring. In addition to all this, they have more ideas about which we will hear at a later date. The Fellowship has set a quota of \$50 as their share in the building fund.

Man - too many of them- in times of great sorrow turns instinctively yet hopefully to God and the Church. He expects and gets spiritual comfort in renewed faith. The church is there, but only there thru the sacrifice and generous giving of the many faithful followers who see in it an every-day fair weather friend. Regular and consistent support of the church by all people is only fair and just. This is an invitation to the faithful church workers and to those who in times of stress turn to the church, to support generously the building project of United.

To survive, to endure, to become a living spiritual institution the church must grow with the growth of the church community, that it may serve the church family in the emergency of sorrow and in times of joy and gladness, worship, inspiration.

There must be a recognition of the obligation of each individual to the church expressed in terms of service and dollars. United is no different than all other churches of the Protestant denominations. It survives only on the dollars contributed by its members and friends. United has embarked on a vital building program and has accepted an important assignment, i.e. raising \$80,000. This sum of money can be raised in Walpole and it must come from members and friends of the church family. It will only come by sacrificial giving.

Having recognized the need, won't you study now your individual or family budget to determine just how generously you can give to the \$80,000 fund.

The First Parish Meeting House was built by order of the General Court on what is now Walpole Common in 1725. For over one hundred years this was the only church in the town. Then other churches were built and for many years there was separate worship. Now as a United Church in 1939 six hundred members unite to build a worthy place to worship, a simple, beautiful House of God.

For our 350 Sunday School pupils, for our Young People's Fellowship, for our choir, for our Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, and for all of our people we build a church where we will want to come to worship. The need is great and Walpole will not be found wanting!

Prospective plans have been accepted for a sanctuary that will seat 400, and a parish house that will house all the various activities of young and old. For over 200 years our churches have helped to make worthy citizens. Now we have the finest opportunity to write the next chapter of enlarged service for United Church.

"Whatever makes men good Christians makes them good citizens!"

-D. Webster



Elizabeth Cottrell  
453 Winter St.  
Walpole, MA 02081



## OLD CHURCH BUILDERS HAD TROUBLES ALSO

Excerpts follow which have been taken from report of building committee appointed 100 years ago to consider altering, enlarging, repairing, rebuilding or removing First Parish Meeting House.

"As Respects Repairing and Rebuilding: we find that the frame of the house is constructed of the best timber which could be obtained at the time it was built, and is superior to any that can be procured at the present day; and also that same is in a high state of preservation; we further find that the length and breadth of the house is of the most favourable dimensions; therefore the whole frame is far preferable to any new one.

As to Removing: we Consider the location of the house, a question of much importance, and have given the subject our most serious consideration. To have the Meeting house located on a spot which will be satisfactory to such as are now on the stage of action and to those who may succeed us is much to be desired, and in our opinion outweighs every other question connected with the subject before us.

Pursuing this inquiry we find many objections to the present location of the house; were the same removed some small distance to the southwest from where it now stands it will be necessary that it should be turned a quarter round so that the end shall face the southwest; still in either case we are unprovided with suitable places for horse-sheds, which is an essential accommodation to parishioners in any country town.

We have examined a piece of land belonging to Harvey Clap Esq. nearly opposite the front of the meeting-house (where Walpole Trust Co. now stands) which we deem a favourable spot for the location of the house, there being room sufficient for Meeting-house, horse sheds, etc.

This land can be obtained for a fair price, and nearly the whole of it might be advantageously occupied with horse-sheds should the house remain on the common.

Boston Nov 30th, 1839

To the Committee of the  
First Parish in Walpole

Gent.

Upon the soil of your  
town were often imprinted the footsteps of my  
idle and happy childhood; with some of the  
members of your own parish, I have passed many  
a happy hour in social intercourse; from nearly  
all of them have I experienced hospitality and  
kindness, and stronger relations than those of  
friendship have allied me to many of them. Lest  
gratitude should seem to be extinct, friendship  
cold, and kindness unrequited, I present, through  
you, to the parish an inconsiderable token of  
my regard - do I err in believing it appropriate?  
Is it not proper to kindle and hallow the wor-  
shipper by reminding him of the approach of  
eternity, through the Unceasing tick of time -  
to teach him by the silent though unceasing  
motion of the dial hand of the decay of this  
world, - how fadeth it away?!

With sentiments of respect,  
I remain, Gentlemen

Your Obdt. Servant

William Richardson.

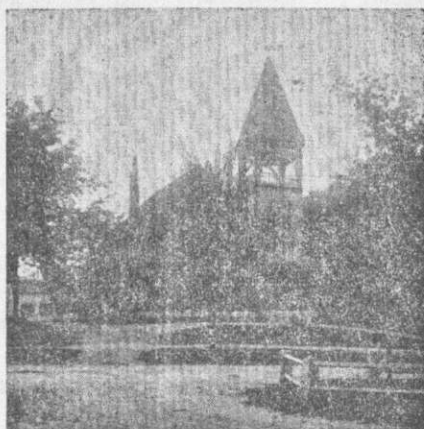
The gift mentioned in the above letter is a large round clock with  
gilt case, which is placed on the front of the balcony over the  
middle aisle, of the United Church in Walpole, Mass. On the face  
of the clock is printed "Gift of Wm. Richardson, Esq., in 1839".  
At the time this gift was made the First Parish Church of Walpole  
was Unitarian. It is the present United Church of Walpole.  
The original letter (of which this is a copy) is among the his-  
toric papers housed in the Walpole Town Library.

Frank R. Larrabee.

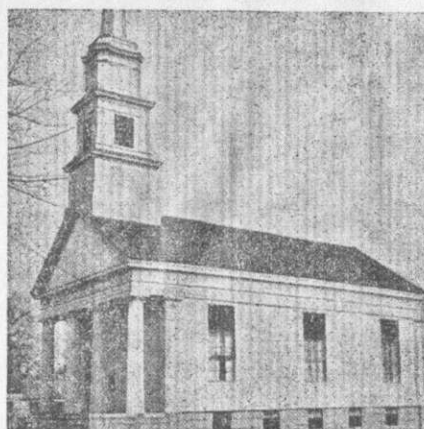
over-

The gift mentioned in the letter on the other side of this page is a large round clock with gilded case, which is placed on the front of the balcony over the center aisle, of the United Church in Walpole, Mass. On the face of the clock is printed "Gift of Wm. Richardson, Esq. in 1839." At the time this gift was made the First Parish Church of Walpole was Unitarian. It was in the summer of 1839 that the church had been moved from the Common to its present location on Common street, when it was renovated both inside and out. So this clock became a part of the new furnishings of the interior. On Dec. 11, 1839 the Rev. John M. Merrick was installed their new pastor, and the new church was dedicated.

The First Church  
in  
Walpole Mass  
1728



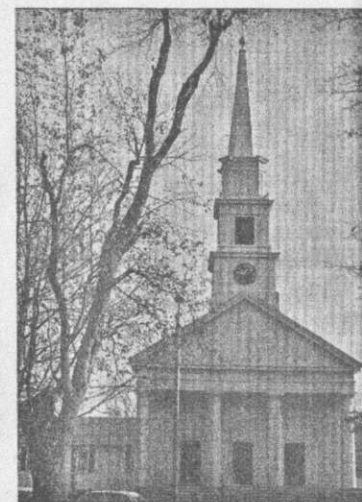
M. E. CHURCH, WALPOLE



UNITARIAN CHURCH, 1st PARISH, WALPOLE



ORTHODOX CONG'L CHURCH, WALPOLE



UNITED CHURCH IN WALPOLE

## United Church to Celebrate 40th Anniversary

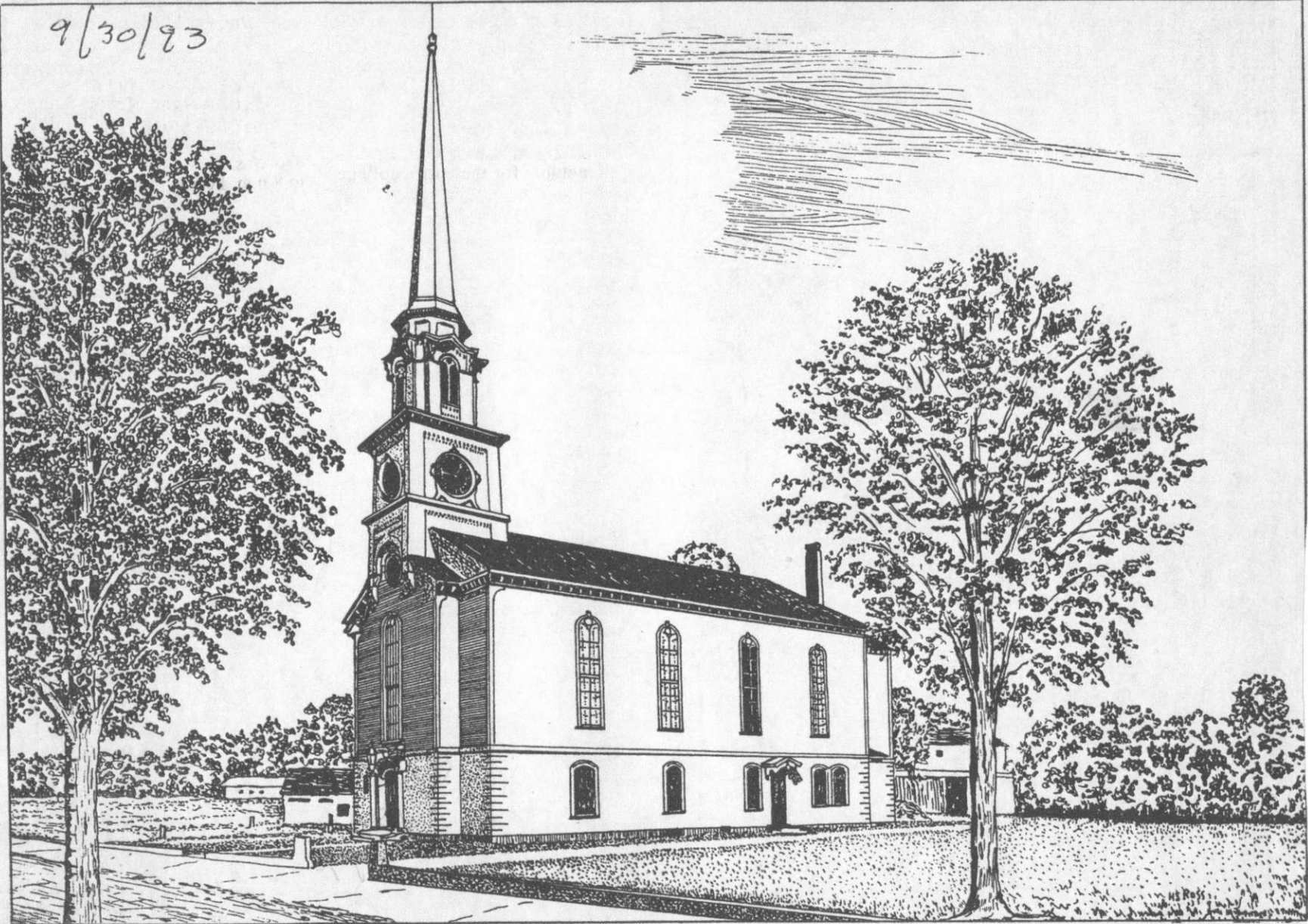
The United Church in Walpole resigned the pastorate of the of the early nineteenth century. The erection of buildings and becoming interested in its wa







9/30/93



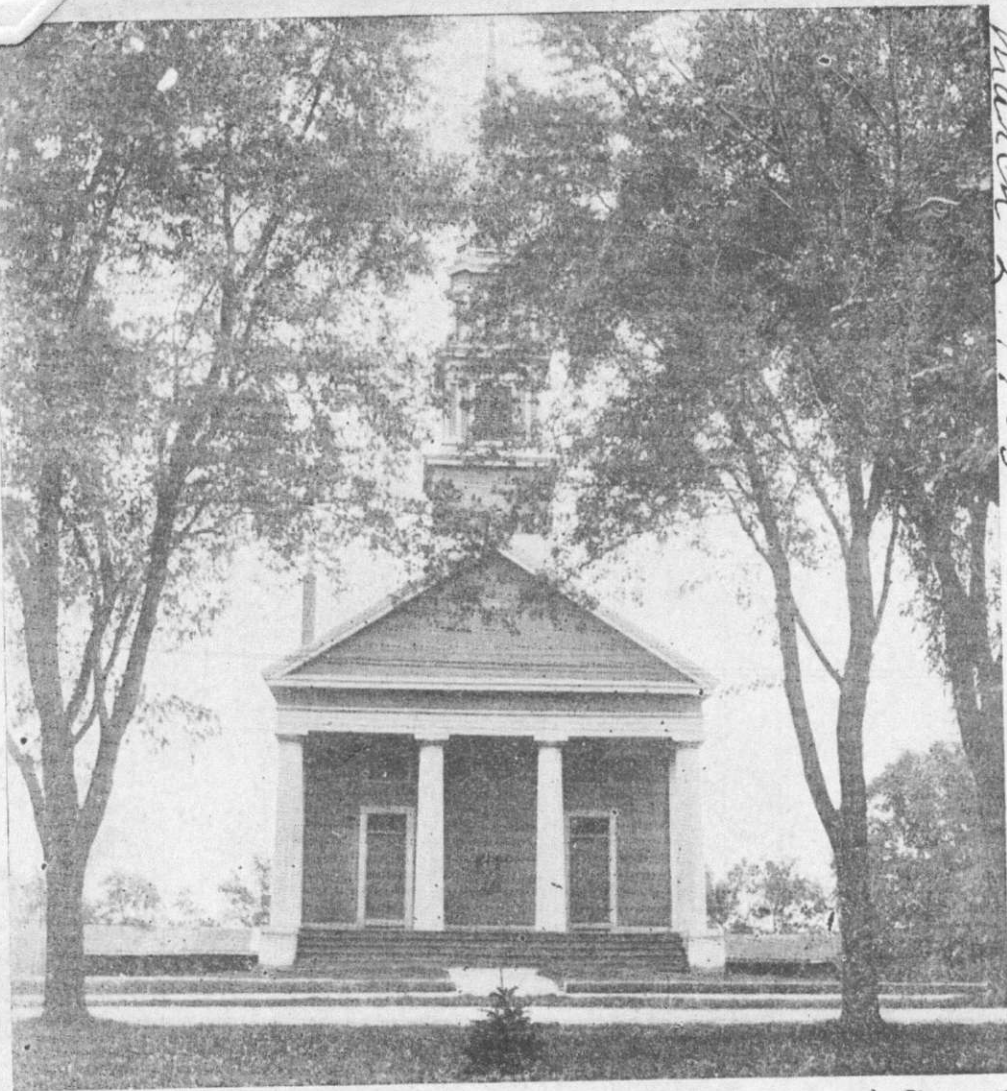
### There in spirit

At the current location of Gallo's Flowers on East Street, the Orthodox-Congregational Church was built in 1826 on land given by Dr. Wild. Rev. Asahel Bigelow was installed as the first minister. It was here that Joshua Allen, the dean of church organists, presided over the organ for nearly 70

years. Twelve years after its centennial celebration, the Orthodox-Congregational Church was weakened during the 1938 hurricane and was taken down.

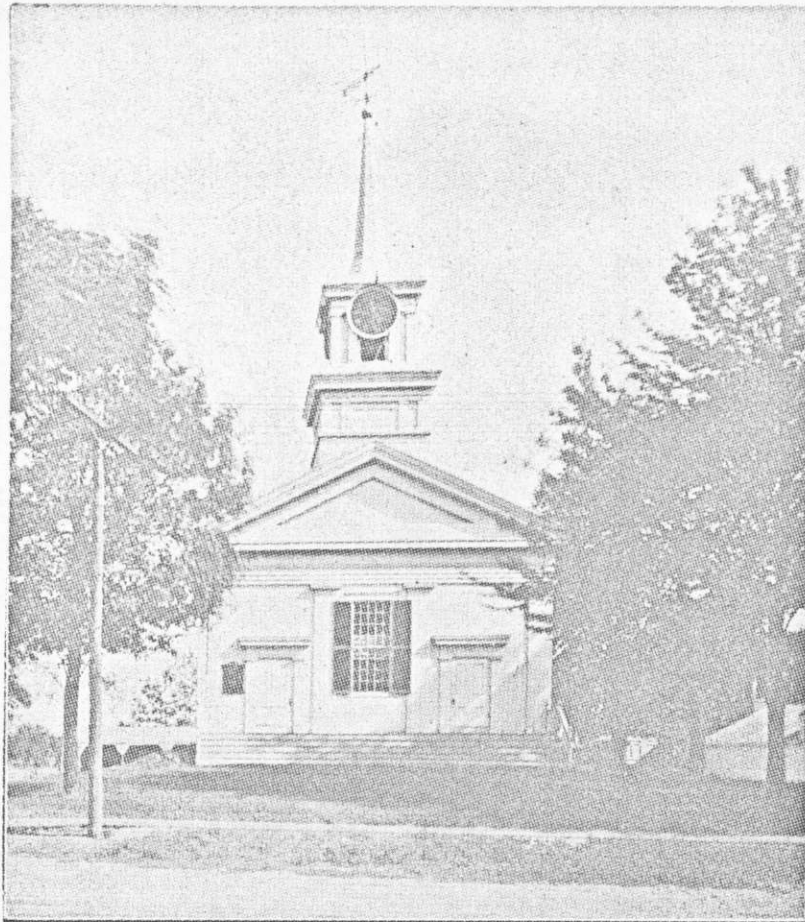
Courtesy of the Walpole Historical Society

Very glad you are to-  
 come Friday night.  
 Maude came to bid me  
 good bye this morning.  
 John went back to  
 school to day. Sam still  
 on leave of absence but better  
 than the old boys Tuesday  
 and feel better for the trip.  
 March 2, 1905- Ma

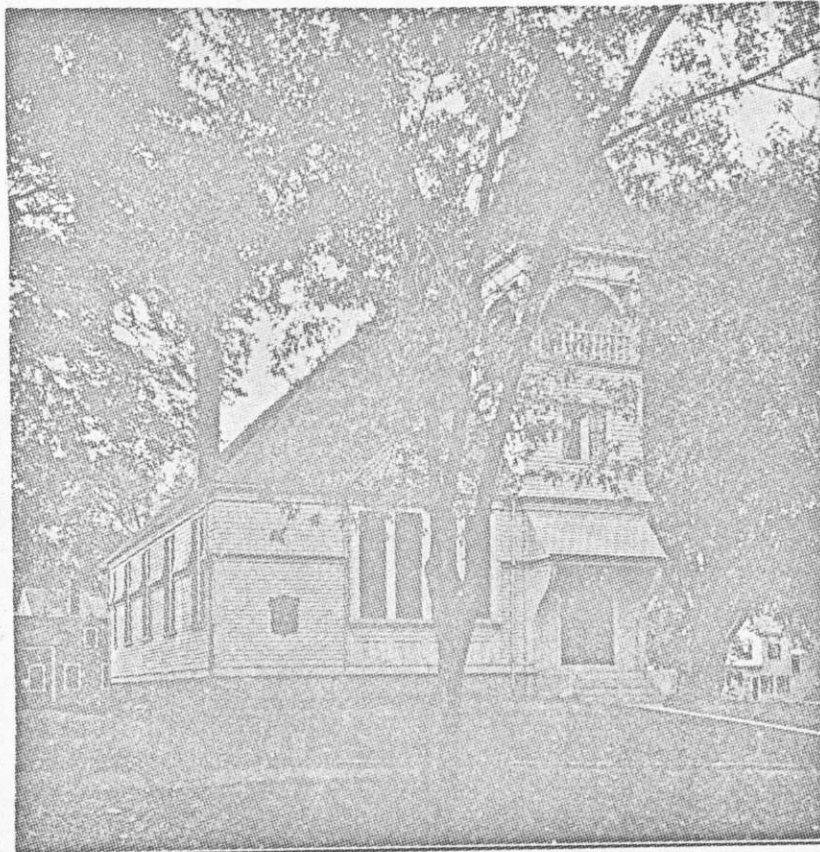


UNITARIAN CHURCH, WALPOLE, MASS. 1905





SOUTH WALPOLE COMMUNITY CHURCH 1846 (2nd bldg)  
Methodist



METHODIST CHURCH Built 1886

ORTHODOX CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
Separated 1826

Pastors

Asabel Bigelow	-	-	-	Installed	1828
George Newhall	-	-	-		1850
Edwin Nevin	-	-	-		1854 - 1857
	1857	-	1859	== Supplies	
Edwin Healey	-	-	-		1859 - 1862
Edward Thurber	-	-	-	-	1862 - 1870
Herman Timlow	-	-	-	-	1870 - 1872
Bela Seymour	-	-	-	-	1873 - 1874
Henry Kendall	-	-	-	-	1875 - 1876
Calvin Hill	-	-	-	-	1876 - 1881
Francis Marsh	-	-	-	-	1881 - 1893
Frank Putnam	-	-	-	-	1894 - 1897
John Keedy	*	-	-	-	1901 - 1905
Hugh McCallum	-	-	-	-	1906 - 1911
A.L. McKenzie	-	-	-	-	1911 - 1926
Charles Weeden	-	-	-	-	1926 - Interim
Roderick MacLeod	-	-	-	-	1927 -

(the last Congregational Minister. Next UNITED)



## Ministers of the First Church

### Congregational

Rev.	Joseph Belcher	-	-	1728 - 1729	
"	Phillips Payson	-	-	1730 - 1778	died
	Mr. Read	-	-	1779 -	did not accept
	Eliphalet Porter	-	-	1782 -	" " "
"	George Morey	-	-	? 1783 - 1826	

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### Unitarian Church

Rev.	John Storor	-	-	1827 - 1839	
"	John Merrick	-	-	1840 - 1865	
"	W.B. Smith	-	-	1865 - 1874	
"	Edward J. Young	-	-	Interim	
"	F.B. Hamblett	-	-	1877 - 1882	
"	J.H. Weeks	-	-	1882 - 1891	
"	G.H. Clare	-	-	1891 - 1892	
"	Robert Savage	-	-	1893 - 1901	
"	Herman Haugerud	-	-	1902 - 1903	
"	Joseph C. Allen	-	-	1904 - 1906	
"	Louis Claus Dethless	-	-	1907 - ?	
"	Henry D. Stevens	-	-	1910 - 1915	
"	Robert Savage				
"	Charles E. Beals				
"	Pickett of Medfield was acting Pastor-			1926	

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### United Church

"	Roderick MacLeod	-	-	last Orthodox Minister-1st United 1929	
"	Leland Mann	-	-	Methodist - became Missionary to Japan	
"	Joseph Ludwigson	-	-	Educational Director	
"	Dr. Charles Williams	-	-	Interim until 1931	
"	Clarênce Schroeder	-	-	1931 - 1939	
"	William Beard	-	-	Interim	
"	Howard Bozarth	-	-	1939 - 1950	
"	Zdenak Bednar	-	-	Youth Minister 1949 - 1951	
"	Alan Hutchinson	-	-	1951 - 1952	
"	Lawrence Barber	-	-	Interim	
"	H. Gardner Anderson	-	-	1951 - 1958	
"	Stanley J. Keach	-	-	Minister of Education	
"	Otto Jonas	-	-	1959	
"	Paul Varga	-	-		

The Story of Our Church Building  
by Alton C. Roberts.

It seems desirable to commit to writing some of the things which I told the Confirmation Class in the two sessions which we had together about our own Church building. The evident interest of these young folks suggested to me that there might be others who would like to know a little about the way in which the lovely white churches of New England came to be.

Also, since the printing of my story of our Church a very fine book "Meetinghouse and Church in Early New England" by Edmund W. Sinnott, has been published which renders some of the material in my account of our early churches somewhat inaccurate. We are greatly indebted to Mr. Sinnott for a true picture of these interesting old buildings. Our Historical Committee has purchased a copy of this book, and it is available to any of our members who wish to learn more about the churches of New England. I also wish to thank the Editor of the Torch for this opportunity to expand the story of our early beginnings.

After a few homes had been built and a village began to take shape, the first concern of the early settlers was to provide a place where public gatherings (especially church services) could be held, for the life of the community centered almost completely around the Church. Every family must attend the services and every citizen was taxed for the support of the minister. Therefore a meeting house was an essential. The first ones in our early towns were very simple in construction, almost all being built after the same general design, from those in Boston to the ones in the smallest villages.

They were nearly square, with the roof a truncated pyramid, sloping up to a flat platform above the center of the building. There would be a cupola and perhaps a small spire, and if the community owned a bell it would be mounted on the top of the roof. Inside there would probably be a gallery around 3 sides, and the pulpit on the fourth side. If one dimension was greater than the other, the pulpit would be on the long side, the main or "great" door would be opposite, with smaller doors on each of the two ends. There would be windows on all four sides, both above and below the gallery. Diamond shaped panes in the windows were common, but not universal.

This type of meeting house began to emerge in many New England villages by 1650. Of course these villages were not far from Boston at this early date, so it is not surprising that they were copied from those in the parent town, but all were practically alike in design - and until the end of the century this pattern was followed in nearly all the meeting houses over New England. Only one is still in existence - the "Old Ship Church" in Hingham - a fine example of the earliest Meeting House. This was built in 1681 and is still in use.

We must not forget that these buildings were used for all purposes which required the people to gather together. Of course the most frequent gathering was for religious worship, and the folks of that time were very much concerned for the salvation of their souls. They welcomed the long services of Sunday morning and afternoon with their 2-hour sermons, and there are records of their even petitioning the minister to hold services on Wednesday nights. Those people must have possessed extraordinary stamina as many of the seats in the meeting houses were only benches, and even those that were supplied with backs were hardly wide enough to support a large man. The meet-

## The Story of Our Church Building

ing house was also the place where the community's ammunition and extra arms were stored, and the green near it was the place where the Minute Men drilled.

None of this type of meeting house were built after 1700 and none of the second type appeared before 1710. The second type was necessitated by the increase in population in the various towns causing a need for larger meeting houses.

Since larger meeting houses were needed, the old square type gave way to a rectangular building with a sharply pitched roof and a ridgepole. We do not know where the first of this type was built, but the "Old South Church" in Boston is a good example of this construction. This was built in 1729 and is certainly not the first of its kind. In fact, wherever a new meeting house was needed anywhere in New England after 1710, this was the style used. The one in Walpole was of this type and was begun in 1726.

It was twelve years before the building was completed. The town records are filled with references and appropriations toward its construction, and if we knew of all the sacrifices these people made to build their Meeting House we would probably be ashamed by our own efforts in support of ours. Practically every man in the little community had a share in its construction and everyone was taxed for its support. There were so many votes to change the dimensions of the building that it is hard to say how big it actually was, but by the final two votes it should have been 26 by 32 feet and 18 feet high at the ~~xx~~ eaves. It was plastered, except for the beams, which protruded into the building after the manner of most houses of that generation. It was unheated, - and Mr. Sinnott suggests that as one reason so many fire and brimstone sermons were preached and apparently welcomed.

The interior arrangement is interesting and somewhat in doubt, as succeeding town meetings voted changes which make the historian's task confusing. Jan. 21, 1738, it was voted "that the room in ye meeting house that is Designed for Pews that was Granted to Persons that would build them at their own Charge should be made into twelve Pews.." Later in that year all of these men relinquished their pew rights when it was discovered that only Ebenezer Fales & Thomas Clap had prepared for the construction of their pews, on condition that the town would, at its own expense, build eight pews and compensate Messrs. Fales & Clap for their lumber and labor. With the two which ~~xx~~ the town had already voted to build this still left twelve pews, but we do not know for sure whether they were ever built. If so, the interior arrangement of our first Meeting House must have been about like the diagram (on page- ), with the twelve pews around the walls and an unknown number of benches arranged in rows in the center. Two stairways are mentioned, but we do not know where they were located. Some meeting houses had front porches large enough to accomodate stairways, and ours may have been like that. I have not attempted to show them, nor the gallery, since that also is uncertain. We know that there was at least one over the main door, and a record of one being added later, probably across one end. Pews were also added later "under the men's and women's stairs", which would indicate that the stairs were inside and not in the porch. This building sufficed until 1781, when it was voted to tear it down and rebuild a larger and more modern Meeting House.



# The Story of Our Church Building

## "Walpole's Second Meeting House"

Jan. 4, 1781 - "Voted to build a meeting house agreeable to a plan that was drawn of Mansfield Meeting House and that all pews be sold to the highest bidder.." (Town Records) This building was to be 40 by 60 feet which would nearly triple the floor space. Quoting the Lewis History, p. 132: "The town soon purchased from Jacob and Ichabod Clap an enlargement of the Meeting House common, thus enabling a final removal of the church further south as indicated in the two plans of Walpole filed in the State House in 1831." If this is so, then the stone cross erected by Mr. Lewis marks only the site of the first Meeting House and we do not know exactly where the second one stood. But why did they wait forty years to file and why two plans? Mr. Lewis states that it was opposite the apothecary shop, and if so it could not have been more than a hundred feet from the old site.

The new building was much like the old one. The interior was arranged with the pulpit on the long, north side and the main door facing it. It was voted to sell the pews to the highest bidders & later a committee priced the pews and assigned them to the families according to their assessed taxes. They priced from \$60 down to \$20, the highest in front and the lowest in the rear. Fifty-one assignments are listed. Two families were assigned to each pew, but it is not stated whether they shared the list price or if each paid the whole. No mention is made of seats in the gallery, but later we read of these being sold. Several of the original deeds of these pews are in our files, some of which were registered. No mention is made of boxed-in pews in this building.

Mr. Lewis says that it was heated by a fireplace, and in 1800 a stove and funnel were proposed in town meeting but voted down. In 1791 it was voted to purchase a bell for 50 £. and this was probably placed in a tower over the porch at the west entrance. A steeple had been voted in a previous meeting. So our Meeting House begins to look like a church outside, but inside it retains the original appearance of the older pattern. One town meeting voted money and appointed a committee to secure stone "to underpin" the Meeting House, but we do not know if this was actually done. Such was the building in which the Rev. George Morey preached during his whole ministry, and the one in which Mr. J.W.B. Storer began his, in 1826.

The calling of Mr. Storer marked the end, and was the cause of the end of unity in the theological belief of the Walpole people for 100 years. Mr. Storer was a liberal, as were most of the theologians educated at Harvard and Yale at this time, and Unitarianism was spreading across New England. Of course, not everyone could accept this any more than they can today, and a large number separated themselves at this time and organized the Orthodox Church. Since these people left the Church, the liberals were left in possession of the building and even though Church and State were becoming separated all over the state, the town was still taxing its citizens for the support of the minister,---but this story will have to wait for another chapter.

Alton C. Roberts, Historian  
The Torch--April 1965.



## The Story of Our Church Building

Our Present Church Building (continued from April Torch-1965)

Walpole, Nov. 11, 1838: "The undersigned having been chosen a Committee by the First Parish in the Town of Walpole for the purpose of taking into consideration the subject of Altering, Enlarging, Repairing, Rebuilding or Removing their Meetinghouse, have attended to that service and submit the following report:

1st. As to Altering & Enlarging, it is our opinion that the house may be Altered much to the Convenience and Satisfaction of the Parish, by taking down the Pews & Galleries and refitting the same into modern Style, without Enlargement of the Body of the house.

2nd. As respects Repairing and Rebuilding; we find that the frame of the house is constructed of the best timber which could be obtained at the time it was built, and is superior to any that could be obtained at the present day, and also that the same is in a high state of preservation; we further find that the length & breadth of the house is of the most favorable dimensions; therefore the whole frame is far preferable to any new one....."

(Note here that this "Best Timber" is already a hundred years old and has already been used twice in building and rebuilding the Meetinghouse.)

"3rd. As to the Removing, we consider the location of the house a question of much importance, and having given the subject our most serious consideration. To have the Meetinghouse located on a spot as will be satisfactory to such as are now on the stage of action, and to those who may succeed us ~~it~~ is much to be desired, and in our opinion outweighs every other question connected with the subject before us....."

Here we shall spare the reader several hundred words and come quickly to the conclusion:

...."In view of the foregoing premises, your committee respectfully recommend that the following measures be adopted:

1st. That the Pews & Galleries of the Meetinghouse be taken down and the house be refitted in modern style.

2nd. That the Meetinghouse be located in such place as the Building Committee shall designate, deference being had to the wishes of the voluntary contributors.

3rd. That the foregoing measures be carried into operation as soon as Fifteen hundred dollars at least be raised by voluntary subscription, the remainder of the expenses to be assessed upon the pews as soon as the house is finished.

Respectfully submitted by  
Joseph Hawes                      Richard Hartshorn  
Truman Clark                      Ebon'r Hartshorn  
Warren (?) Clark                  John A. Gould  
   Joshua Stetson"

## The Story of Our Church Building

The portion which we have omitted considers the reasons for changing the location - the chief one seeming to be the fact that there was no room for horse-sheds on the property, as necessary then as parking space is today, and a description of a piece of land on the other side of the street which would overcome this difficulty. Had this proposal been adopted, the Unitarian Church would have been located about where the present Co-operative Bank is now. (And do you recall from our Story of the Church and its Ancestors that, but for the accident of a fire the Methodist Church would have been built on the spot where Stone St. enters Main?)

I have not been able to find any records of a Building Committee and we have to do a little guessing now. We do know that on May 28, 1839, a deed was given by Joseph Hawes for the lot on which our Church now stands, and that the building was turned so the end faced southwest and was moved to that location, and the porches were removed. We also know that the "house was refitted in modern style."

Although no one seems to have noticed it, just one hundred years had passed since our first old Meetinghouse was completed and in exactly another hundred years, in 1939, our old building will have undergone another complete rejuvenation. Perhaps those who control the destiny of the United Church when another hundred years roll around - perchance some of the tots who now soil their knees on the floor of our toddlers' room - may carry on this cycle of the centuries.

During the early years of the 19th century a renewed interest in religion, as well as literature, art and architecture began to manifest itself, and one aspect of this was a growing dissatisfaction with the old meetinghouses. A seeking after beauty & a feeling that the Church should gather in "temples of worship" led to a rather sudden change in the appearance, inside & out, of the buildings. Also, recalling that these meetinghouses were also used for town meetings and other public gatherings, which were often boisterous and sometimes unruly, it is easy to understand why church people felt that they needed a home just for the Church. Besides all this, the State and Church were becoming separate entities and in the year 1811 this separation was legalized in Massachusetts. As a result of these forces, all the new church buildings that were erected during the first four decades of the century took on the same general appearance. Some of these beautiful structures were designed by eminent architects and many were copied from their designs.

After 1825 the Greek Temple became the model for most church buildings, erected or remodeled, and our church is no exception. The roof was extended, & four Doric columns to support it were erected. There were two doors opening into a vestibule, or perhaps directly into the church, and there were balconies around three sides. The building extended only to a point midway between what are now the middle & front windows. The pulpit faced the main doors and the pews were placed against the sides, with a bank of pews in the center, allowing two aisles. These were open pews and some of them were used when the building was remodeled for United Church in 1939. A long row of horse sheds, open on the front, stretched across the whole back of the lot which then extended only twenty feet or so back of our present Parish House.



## The Story of Our Church Building

The tower and steeple were doubtless erected at this time, using the hand-hewn timbers that were used in the old tower. The bell now in the tower carries the inscription: "Cast by George Holbrook, East Medway, 1839." There seems to be no record of what happened to the old bell which the town purchased in 1791. At some time a clock was installed in the tower which tolled the hours on the bell; the tolling striker is still attached to the framework.

At some time an organ was purchased & placed in the rear gallery, and arrangements were made to seat the choir there. (see note) A large clock, given by William Richardson of Boston in memory of his wife, was placed on the rear gallery wall in 1839. This is still in use.

In December and January, 1873-74, the church building was again remodeled and rededicated on January 25. We quote from the old record: "The Society, which has worshiped during the past seven weeks in Bacon's Hall, to-day occupied the meeting house, which in the meantime has been very much improved. The galleries have been removed, a recess has been built in the rear of the pulpit; the walls and ceiling have been tastefully frescoed; new lamps have been introduced, etc., the whole at an expense of \$1000 furnished by the Ladies' Aid Society."

Much later a stained glass window was placed in the alcove at the rear of the pulpit; the gift of Mrs. Junius Beebe of Boston in memory of her grandfather, the Reverend John M. Merrick, who was the Minister from 1839 to 1865.

## The United Church

In 1927, when the union of the three Churches took place, the building was closed and all meetings were held in the Orthodox Church on East st., the largest of the three buildings. The old First Church stood empty and idle for over ten years, now a part of the property of the new United Church. In 1938 a hurricane wrecked the steeple, and the Church seriously considered selling the property. A tall pine mast was the main timber in the spire and this was salvaged by Rev. Alexander L. McKenzie who resided in Walpole, having been the Minister in the old Congregational Church before retiring. Mr. McKenzie's hobby was woodworking, and he made several items of interest from this old timber. Among them are a cross and two collection plates which are now in our historical collection.

In 1939 the United Church decided, after many plans and suggestions had been discussed, that the 200-year old framework of the First ~~Church~~ Church could continue to serve and another complete renovation of the old building took place. The Nave was lengthened and the Chancel added. Three doors, instead of two, provided adequate entrance and exit. The organ was removed from the gallery and a new organ, which included a number of pipes from the organ in the East St. Church, was installed beside the Chancel where the choir was now seated. An altar was placed at the far end of the Chancel, and a lectern and simple pulpit at the front.

## The Story of Our Church Building

At the rear of the structure a Parish House was added, forming a "T" -shaped building. The total cost was about \$87,500. The architects were the firm of Perry, Hepburn & Shaw of Boston. Mr. Shaw had just finished work on the restoration of Williamsburg, Va., & was considered an authority on Colonial Architecture. He gave his personal attention to the project, making sure that all parts of the building were in keeping with the architecture of the period. The work was finished during the year 1940, the first service being held in the new Church on June 23rd of that year. A few years later the flagstone walk was laid in front, and at that time Mrs. Joseph Leach arranged to have the stepping stone brought from in front of the Congregational Church and placed in the walk directly in front of the present steps. The stained glass window that had been over the pulpit of the Methodist Church was incorporated into the Chapel altar (given in memory of John and Ruth Allen and dedicated in 1953) in the Parish House. Unfortunately, no suitable place has been found for the beautiful circular window that was given in memory of Mr. Merrick. Perhaps some day this can be provided.

After fifteen years had passed, the Parish House proved to be inadequate to the needs of a growing Church School, and an addition was planned. A campaign was conducted under the leadership of Mr. Charles Howard, and \$160,000 was raised. Costs had increased and the nineteen room addition was nearly twice the cost of the original renovation of the church building and parish house. This new section was dedicated in 1956 and provides space for a large part of the Church School, as well as a large room for youth activities. A new pastor's study was also added in the new wing, providing adequate room and privacy and at the same time permitting him to be near the center of the week-day activities when needed.

Thus ends, for the present time, the long story of the beginnings and development of the home of the United Church in Walpole. At all turning points in its history, it truly seems as if God had led the various committees and individuals who made decisions regarding its future, to the end that it stands today, - a beautiful example of New England church architecture, yet modern and adequate for the multiplicity of activities which a Church in these days must carry on.

Among the scores of men and women who worked tirelessly to accomplish the renovation and rebuilding of the church and parish house and its addition, there are four men and one woman who must be mentioned because very largely through their devoted leadership, vision and toil, the project was brought to a successful conclusion.

Henry P. Kendall gave wise counsel and was always available for advice. Perhaps the greatest contribution that he could make was through the Vice-Chairman of his committee, Ralph S. Howland. Mr. Howland, Purchasing Agent for the Kendall Company was made available to devote almost his entire time to the project and, working closely with Mr. Shaw, he supervised practically every detail in the construction of the church and parish house in 1939 & 40, and also the addition in 1956.

Henry Holbrook gave untiring leadership, to directing the financial campaign, and it was through his inspired efforts and the devoted work



## The Story of Our Church Building

of the men and women who formed his organization that the building could be dedicated free of debt as soon as it was completed.

Co-laborer with Mr. Holbrook was Mrs. Joseph (Lottie) Leach. Mrs. Leach was responsible for much of the ~~in~~ financial work, the editorial activity and research, and the publicity necessary in such a project. She had charge of the laying of the corner-stone and collected its contents.

When the parsonage was built on the site of the old Methodist Church and also when the addition to the parish house was necessary, the Church called on Charles R. Howard to lead in securing the finances needed, and again a devoted worker inspired his helpers to success.

These five people are no longer with us, but their memory should be an inspiration to us to carry on the work of the Church in the same spirit of devotion.

-finis-

Alton C. Roberts, Historian  
(The Torch, for May 1965)

### Notes from Major John Allen Gould's Diary:

April 20, 1851 "The first Parish in Walpole have provided for their use an organ, which was used in the church this day for the first time. The tone of the organ seems smooth and pleasant. The cost of the organ is about \$675." -page 23.

Dec. 7th, 1852 "Settled my account at Probate Court as executor of the will of Zilpha Smith, late of Walpole, widow, deceased. Mrs. Smith died in October 1851, at the age of 93 years and some months. I wrote the will of Mrs. Smith about three months before her decease. By the will the church of the First Parish in Walpole has received the sum of \$1265., the income of which is to be applied to the support of the ministry of said church and the parish with which it is connected." p.26

Suggested Resolution

To the Walpole Methodist Episcopal Church

Greeting, -

In a business meeting of the Walpole Congregational Church on Friday, Oct. 22nd, 1926 the following resolutions <sup>were</sup> unanimously passed.

~~Resolved~~ <sup>Whereas</sup> that the present division among the protestant churches in Walpole, <sup>(1)</sup> is a serious hindrance to that spiritual union and fellowship which should characterize a Christian community, (2) is accountable for divided efforts along all lines of church activity, (3) is responsible for an economic waste, in that the community is supporting four <sup>churches</sup> ministers where one, adequately supported, could more effectively minister to the religious needs of the community. <sup>Therefore it</sup>

Resolved, that in the light of the forgoing ~~resolution~~, the Walpole Congregational Church, <sup>hereby</sup> cordially invites the members of the Walpole Methodist Episcopal <sup>Church</sup> to join with them in corporate fellowship.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this vote be sent (1) to the Pastor of the M.E. Church

(2) Church Epiphany

(3) The First Parish Church

A congregational meeting was held in the church vestry at 8 PM Oct 22. 1917 The meeting was opened with prayer by the pastor. -

Rev. Mr McLeod then presented the object of the meeting which was called particularly to discuss the church union situation in Walpole. -

Rev Mr Mann - pastor of the Methodist Episcopal church was called upon and presented the views of his people. - Starting with the time of his first duties here in Walpole three years ago, he traced this thought up to the present time, and suggested that the time was now opportune to proceed, in his opinion. He advanced three reasons why his denomination should loose its identity in Walpole in favor of Congregationalism. His remarks were very well made. -

Deacon Howe then brought forward the following motion for discussion which was duly seconded.

The chair man then called for a standing vote and all 28 members present voted favorably.

Mr McLeod then spoke regarding the situation ~~and~~ the Unitarian and Episcopal churches and stated the opinions of individuals from these churches ~~with~~ whom he had discussed the matter.

Believing that now was the opportune time for us to invite them to consider the matter, Deacon Stouff presented the same motions for each church as was presented to the M. & E. Church. for their consideration. - These motions were seconded and when put to vote were carried unanimously. -

The chair men suggested that it was necessary to appoint a deacon to fill out the unexpired term of the late Deacon Everett.

A motion duly made and seconded it was voted that the acting clerk cast one ballot in favor of Mr. John S Allen.

This ballot was cast and Mr John S Allen was duly elected to fill the unexpired term of the late Deacon Everett.

On motion of ~~Rev~~ Mr Adams the meeting was adjourned at 9.05 P.M.  
H. E. Smith Acting Clerk,  
Pro Tem.



# HARK, I HEAR SWEET MUSIC

Solo and Chorus, for Easter



Words and Music by  
JOSHUA ALLEN

|| Price 15¢ ||

JOSHUA ALLEN, WALPOLE, MASS.

## HARK! I HEAR SWEET MUSIC

Solo and Chorus for Easter

Words and Music by  
JOSHUA ALLEN

Moderato

VIOLIN

SOPRANO SOLO

1. Hark I hear sweet mu - sic on the air to - day,  
 2. By and by when East - er days have passed a - way

It must be the an - gels sing - ing joy - ful - ly  
 we may sing with an - gels oh so joy - ful - ly

Sing - ing of a Sav - iour that is risen to - day  
 Up a - bove in heav - en with the hap - py throng

Allegretto *CHORUS*

Yes this bless - ed Sav-iour rose to - day  
Jes - us Christ will then be our song

Then sing

Hal - le - lu - jah! hal - le - lu - jah! hal - le - lu - jah! to this Sav - iour

to this Sav-iour risen to - day Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah!

Hal - le - lu - jah! to this Sav-iour: For this Sav-iour rose to - day

*Tenors sing the Air in the Chorus.*



## A Visit to Mr. George Morey of Lexington

Sometime in July (1961) a voice on my telephone said:  
"I read in the Alumni Bulletin (of Harvard University) that you are writing a history of the Walpole Church." I allowed as how one might stretch his imagination a bit and call it that.

"Well," the Voice went on, "I am George Morey of Lexington. I am a descendant of the George Morey who used to be a Minister of that church and who led the people of Walpole into the light of Unitarianism. I have, his desk and chair and a pair of his breeches and a chest full of his papers. I thought you might like to come and look the stuff over. I live in Lexington.

Of course I thanked him and said I would love to. The result was a visit with Mr. Jones to Mr. Morey's beautiful home. Mrs. Morey, a gracious lady who occupies the Chair on Lexington's Board of Selectmen, received us and immediately we were immersed in the 18th century.

A tall clock stood in the hall, probably from Rev. Morey's, and beside it his pulpit chair, in which we sat. In the dining room was his desk - Governor Winthrop style - one of the most beautiful I have ever seen. On the desk was a carved wooden chest, filled with papers and documents which, to me, were out of this world. And they might well have been but for the loving care which has been given them by the generations of Moreys who have preserved them.

On a table nearby was a huge Bible which probably once rested on the pulpit in our old First Church and from which Rev. Morey read the lesson on the Sunday mornings of the forty years of his pastorate.

Mrs. Morey opened a drawer of the desk and there was the "Breeches" knee length with buckles, silk - and a waistcoat to match with a white ruffled collar. Rev. Morey must have been quite a dandy in his day, and we could almost see him, with his heavy cane, taking his consti-

continued-

tutional along the road; stopping to have a word with Deacon Clapp or admonishing a youth for shying a stone at a stray cat.

There is more to this story, but we must not impose on the editor at this late date, (editor of the "Torch") so we shall defer telling of Mr. Morey's generous gifts to our Church's historical collection until next month.

see next page-

2

We were hardly seated at the table preparing to examine the old papers which lay before us when Mrs. Morey brought us a large, leather-bound volume, evidently very old, and said "Mr. Morey wants the church to have this Reference Bible if you think it would be acceptable." It proved to be the first volume of a set of six, printed in 1720, every one of which showed the marks of much use. You can imagine the enthusiasm with which we accepted this marvelous old Bible for the historical collection of the Church. Six other small books from "The Walpole Ladies' Literary and Moral Society's Library" were also given us to bring back with us.

Now we turned our attention to the papers which were spread out on the table. Perhaps the oldest which we examined was the will of our early Minister's father in which he bequeathed, among other things, his desk to his son, George. This desk might very likely have been the very one beside which we were sitting at that moment! If so, its age was pushed well back into the early 1700's or even the late 1600's - a quarter of a millenium ago! Be that as it may, this was not the piece of writing that was of most significance for us.

There was another, a sheet of paper about eight by sixteen inches, folded once to make four pages. The writing on this was almost like printed script, it was so beautifully even. It covered the first page and the second and part of the third, and was followed by the signatures of ten men. To us, this paper seemed priceless, for it was the original Covenant of our First Church, organized on July 10, 1730, by the Rev. Phillips Payson; our second Minister, and Mr. Morey's immediate predecessor.

Mrs. Morey had brought us a folder with the suggestion that if there were any special papers that we thought the Church would like to have, we place them in it, and she would talk with Mr. Morey about letting us have them. I reverently placed that Covenant in the folder with a couple of other items of interest, and one can hardly imagine my thrill, a few days later, to receive a letter from Mr. Morey presenting these priceless papers to our Church!

Alton C. Roberts